

become our enemies. They may not be able to put a word as to why they have such hatred, but the spiritual sides are the opposite. It is the nature of the proud to attack the humble. They like to make the righteous look wicked and themselves look righteous, while they walk in their wickedness. With this inbred hatred, they will naturally incline to slander, or delight in the gossip against the humble. That is what we see portrayed here. Isaiah reported the same:

20 Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!
21 Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!
22 Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink:
23 Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him! Isaiah 5:20-23

The word for “*forged*” means “to stick on, as a patch; to impute falsely”. The imagery is very descriptive. A garment is of woven material, and was joined together as the basis of its existence. A patch is some other weaving that is simply placed upon the original garment. It is not truly part of its weaving. The wicked do such to the humble in accusations that are like that patch. They are false charges, of some other material, that is not truly part of the humble person’s garment. It is rumor of ill that they delight to sew on the garment and point, saying to all, “Look at that ugly weave, isn’t that totally unacceptable to their profession?” When they know all along, it is the patch they staged for the purposes of their wicked accusations. This Psalmist is experiencing such a contradiction of sinners.

3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Hebrews 12:3

The second half of this verse presents to us the place this godly servant takes. He doesn’t take to the counter-attack position. He simply declares his standing fast, in whole heart commitment, to the obedience of God’s precepts. Even with the attacks, he refuses to change his focus.

70 Their heart is as fat as grease; but I delight in thy law.

The term translated “*as grease*” carries the meaning “to be thick”. The imagery the Psalmist

is describing is that of a hard, solidified mass. The heart of the godly is soft and pliable to God’s Word. It listens intently and eagerly. It is sensitive, since it has been humbled. The heart of the wicked is thick and stupid to the light of God. It’s conscience is insensitive. It laughs at the rebuke that God has given in His Word.

The problem, or the answer, lies in one’s heart condition. As for the servant of Yahweh, all God’s directions and leadings (torath) are the delights of his heart. It is not a path of mundane obligation. The one who expresses that heart attitude, had better diligently do a heart searching. We are told, the godly servant will “*delight*”.

I read these words of A.W. Tozer the other day that really picture this “*delight*” attitude:

“Whatever keeps me from my Bible is my enemy.”

71 It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.

There is one other verse in the Psalms that tells us “*It is good for me*”. I thought it profitable to hold these side by side to see what is good for us:

28 But it is good for me to draw near to God: Psalm 73:28a

One shows us, drawing close to God, while verse 71 holds before us that same word for “humble, or be bowed down”. The two go together for that “good”. The only way to draw near to God is to go in humility.

The second half has a connective “*that*”. It is dependent upon the first half. Like we saw earlier, our brains fail to apprehend God’s judgment and knowledge in the right way. This verse is clearly showing that the only way to learn God’s statutes is by God’s special working. He has to enlighten us. The only way that is going to take place, will be by our hearts melting before Him and humbling ourselves before His goodness. After that has become our position, we are able to draw near to God and learn.

72 The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.

This closing verse presents the second “Good to me”. The first one beginning the previous verse. This verse presents two treasures. The one as opposed to the other. The “good” is the laws (torath) that come from the mouth of God. Remember that

the “torath” are all God’s means of directing us. The real treasure for God’s servants is to hear the Words of God. To hear God’s Words is more than just education. It is that work of His Spirit, giving us enlightenment.

The other treasure is the gold and silver of this world. At the beginning, I pointed out he didn’t come seeking the treasures of this world. He was seeking to know God’s ways and life better. Before, we were able to notice it by omission. Here we see him close out the section by direct mention. The riches of this world are not called “good”. God’s Word is called good, but never are the material riches. In fact, consider the Psalmist mentioned being bowed down twice, as being the doorway to discovering the treasure of God. We can surmise the “treasures” of this world had to be removed, so he could bow down. The silver and the gold tend to act as a bolster to the proud of this world. Silver and gold isn’t evil, but the pull to covetousness and idolatry, that it tends to have upon human hearts, is insipid.

Like the old game show that used to depict the choice of curtains to the contestants, which curtain do you want? Curtain #1 or curtain #2? Only this time, as the contestant, you know what is behind each curtain.

Psalm
119



Teth

The Good: Choosing Your Treasure

9

Hebrew reads from right to left. Notice the “Teth” that precedes each verse:

טוב עשית עמ-עבדך	יהוה כדברך:	65
טוב טעם ודעת למדני	כי במצותיך האמנתי:	66
טרם אענה אני שגג	ועתה אמרתך שמרתי:	67
טוב-אתה ומטיב	למדני חסידך:	68
טפלו עלי שקר ודים	אני בכל-לב אצר פקודיך:	69
טפש כחלב לבם	אני תורתך שעשעתי:	70
טוב-לי כיעניתי	למען אלמד חסידך:	71
טוב-לי תורת-פיך	מאלפי זקב וקסרך:	72

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Reading from the King James Bible.
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 entitled “The Good: Choosing Your Treasure”

Psalm 119

Teth

65 Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O LORD, according unto thy word.

66 Teach me good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed thy commandments.

67 Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.

68 Thou *art* good, and doest good; teach me thy statutes.

69 The proud have forged a lie against me: *but* I will keep thy precepts with *my* whole heart.

70 Their heart is as fat as grease; *but* I delight in thy law.

71 *It is* good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.

72 The law of thy mouth *is* better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.

This is the ninth section of Psalm 119. Having covered a more detailed overview of the Psalm, it is my intention to go more thoroughly through each section. Briefly, each section is according to the letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Each letter contains 8 verses that begin with that specific letter. Teth is the ninth letter, so each verse, in the Hebrew, begins with a word starting with the letter Teth.

In Hebrew, unlike English, each letter was originally also a word. We do not know the meaning of every letter today, but we do know most. Teth's meaning is uncertain but possibly, "Serpent; something rolled or twisted together". Since the Psalmist built the Psalm based on the letters, it is likely the meaning of each letter played in his thoughts as he composed each section. In this section, I see a match to the section "Zain" in following a word that begins with the letter. That is the word for "good".

This Psalm is also based upon the usage of a host of words that are "legal" terms in the Hebrew. I have gone into a more thorough definition of each word, as it has been encountered, in the previous sections. I would recommend going there to find those expansions. I will cover additional words as we come across them.

Yahweh, the Source of All Good

65 Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O LORD, according unto thy word.

You might think of this section as the "good" section. The Hebrew word for "good" is "Tob", which starts with Teth. "Tob" is the first word for verses 65, 66, 68, 71 and 72. Verse 68 has a double "good"! The last two verses have it, "good to me". That's six "goods" in one, eight-verse section. I would have to say the theme of this section is clearly shouted out. Following the previous section, clear in its declaration of God's grace and continued life in Him, "good" is indeed appropriate. You might say the Psalmist is humming a little tune like "O Happy Day!"

After going through Cheth, and seeing the testimony of conversion and a continued walking with God, it is well suited that such would be followed up with a praise section. This section being a recollection of God's gracious dealings with the Psalmist. It is also a praise with a serious lesson for the new in Christ.

As we have noted the use of God's name and the personal position of being God's servant, so here

we see both in the beginning. The literal reading, "Good You have done with Your servant, Yahweh as Your Word". The first word being that of gratitude, praise and an acknowledgement of God's faithfulness. His heart is filled with thanksgiving.

The Psalmist has continued his approach from the position of a servant. (Remember the prodigal son as he was planning the return to his father? Take me as your servant.) This grateful Psalmist comes before God, addressing Him in that more intimate name revealed to Moses of "Yahweh". He comes as one of God's people and servants, not just some distant unknowable "deity". He confesses that Yahweh has dealt with him in direct accordance to His written Word. We can also glean from this, that this servant could not have made such a statement if he had been ignorant of God's Word.

66 Teach me good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed thy commandments.

The heart of this servant shows more of that incredible grace. A literal reading for this has, "Good judgment and knowledge teach me, as Your commandments (mitzvot) I have believed (counted faithful)." Such presents to our view the heart of a disciple. You will notice he doesn't come seeking all kinds of material blessing, following verse 65. His heart is not self centered in greed. His heart is infatuated with hearing the Word of God. His request is for God to give him that which his natural mind cannot do. Even if he felt he could gain this on his own, he knows he had better not trust to that.

6 For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.

Proverbs 2:6

The theme of knowledge and understanding is a frequent theme found throughout the Proverbs. Amassing knowledge is good, if found in the right way. If found in the way apart from God, it is actually dangerous. It will definitely be a foundation for pride and arrogance of heart.

Knowledge is a list of facts. Judgment goes beyond the learning of laws. It requires the wise heart to perceive proper application. From this we can see the good servant's, or disciple's, need is to grow in a knowledgeable foundation of scripture and the Spirit's guidance in its applications to living.

The second part of this verse, is a lesson based on the first part. Unless we seek God's face with that same heart of the disciple to have eyes to see, we

will not see the significance of the second part. In the New Testament, we see:

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

Ephesians 2:8

Paul shows us the active power of faith in union with grace. Now look back at the verse. The Psalmist distinctly unites "commandments" with an act of faith. He doesn't say, "I have kept your commands", though we have seen he has been following them.

The word for "believed" is "amen". We use it at the end of prayers. Unless we personally pray the first portion of verse 66, we will not be able to understand the union of law and grace. The Psalmist is approaching God's commandments in faith, not as a list of rules to do. The one is life, while the other approach was the power of Pharisaical death. The laws of bondage.

67 Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.

The word translated "afflicted" also means "humbled, bowed down". The word translated "went astray" also carries the meaning of "err (as in mentally); to sin (ignorantly or inadvertently)".

Whether the Psalmist is referring to some suffering or just the humbling that had taken place, he is confessing to the path of darkness he had walked in. We all walk in sin, until we are broken by God's Spirit and humble ourselves. Whatever the humbling process God uses, it will be an affliction to the pride of our hearts. Until the pride is broken, we cannot help but err in mind and action. This is a powerful point that surfaces in conjunction with verse 66. We cannot have reliable knowledge and judgment UNTIL we are humbled!

In the official arena of the courts of law, how terrifying to have judges who have never humbled themselves before God. They are truly incapable of not going astray in their judgments. God can direct them, but they are themselves the source of many corruptions. That is a reason we have seen such corruption in the court system of our day.

In the American courts, there is the practice of the people in a courtroom to rise when the judge enters. It used to be that the judge would enter with an open Bible in his hands. The people would stand in honor of the Word of God. Later the

judges pitched the Bible and expected the people to stand to their honor, apart from the Word of God. Oh, how dare they spit in the face of God's judgments in taking the honor due to God's Word upon themselves!

The second portion of this verse uses the word often used for "speech". It is also in the plural. The Psalmist is revealing to us that now that he has been humbled, and ceased from the course of error and sin, he "keeps, observes and guards" what God is saying to him. We should note the active position of obedience. He doesn't say, "I will start trying to keep", or "I'm on a path of slowly improving now". Since his humility, he has been on the path, and continues to keep God's Words.

68 Thou art good, and doest good; teach me thy statutes.

The first part of this verse is an interesting phrase. One literal reading might be, "Good You are and *How Good!*" The second good is a compound word that could be an exclamation. With either reading of "doest good" or "How Good!", we see the principal of doubling for confirmation of fact and importance. This is a Hebraic mode of writing for emphasis.

Verse 68 is the end of the first half of this section. This acts as a kind of wrap up to the thoughts of this section. God's goodness crescendos in the song, to be punctuated with the disciple's heart that bows at His feet. As he acknowledges God's goodness, he sees his personal need of being conformed to the image of God.

When we think of good, we often think of just some blessing God may give us. As we see from the words of Jesus:

19 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God.

Luke 18:19

"Good" also is the very holiness of God. It is doing what is right without ever failing.

Choosing the Good

69 The proud have forged a lie against me: but I will keep thy precepts with my whole heart.

We saw the position of humility the Psalmist had come to. When we enter into that place, we will find that those who continue in their pride will